

Remarks

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-46 are pending in this application, with Claims 1, 11-13, 22, 23, 26-28, 45 and 46 being independent. Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 11-14, 17, 19, 22, 23, 26, 27, 29, 35, 37, 40, 41 and 43 have been amended herein. Applicant submits that support for the amendments can be found in the original disclosure, and therefore no new matter has been added.

Initially, Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that Claims 22-24 and 40-44 recite allowable subject matter. Claims 22 and 23 have been rewritten in independent form and are believed to be in condition for allowance. Claim 24, which depends from Claim 23, is also believed to be allowable. Favorable consideration is requested.

Applicant notes that the Examiner acknowledged Applicant's claim for foreign priority and receipt of all the certified copies of the priority documents. Applicant wishes to clarify, however, a typographical error in the Claim to Priority filed July 17, 2001. In that document, the filing year of each of the priority documents was listed as "2001", whereas each priority document was filed in 2000, as reflected in the Combined Declaration and Power of Attorney and the certified copies of the priority documents. A revised Claim to Priority is being submitted herewith to reflect the correct information. Favorable consideration is requested.

Claim 2 has been objected to because the phrase "and the like" allegedly renders the claim indefinite. Without conceding the propriety of this objection, Applicant

has reworded Claim 2 to avoid the phrase in question. Similar changes have been made to Claims 14 and 29. Favorable consideration is requested.

Claims 1-21, 26-39, and 45-46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U. S. Patent No. 6,128,401 (Suzuki et al.) in view of U. S. Patent No. 6,393,140 (Itako). This rejection is traversed.

Each of independent Claims 1, 11-13, 26 and 27 recites, inter alia, judging for each of predetermined areas whether or not an output requested image includes information indicating a judgment object image, and determining the predetermined area for each predetermined distance with respect to the output requested image, with the predetermined area being an area including at least one of the information indicating the judgment object image.

With these arrangements and methods, the load in the process of judging whether or not the output requested image includes information indicating the judgment object image can be suppressed. That is, the area to be judged can be determined not as the entire output requested image, but as an area including at least one of the information indicating the judgment object image.

Suzuki et al. relates to image reading and processing for preventing copying of bank notes or securities. A detecting unit can detect positional information of an original image and a discriminating unit can extract pattern data of a certain part of the original image and discriminate whether the original image is the predetermined image. As understood by Applicant, Suzuki et al. can judge whether or not the output requested image includes information indicating the judgment object image, but the area to be judged is directed to the entire output requested image.

Therefore, Suzuki et al. fails to disclose or suggest judging for each of predetermined areas whether or not an output requested image includes information indicating a judgment object image and determining the predetermined area for each predetermined distance with respect to the output requested image, with the predetermined area being an area including at least one of the information indicating the judgment object image, as is recited in independent Claims 1, 11-13, 26 and 27.

Thus, Suzuki et al. fails to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in these independent claims.

Itako relates to an identifying method and device in which detected data for a plurality of predetermined positions on a particular bill are converted into relative-value data to extract a characteristic pattern. For each of positions, a distance value indicating how many times a difference of an adjusted sample data from the standard average is greater than a standard deviation is evaluated so as to identify the bill. As understood by Applicant, in Itako, although the bill is discriminated by using a distance value according to the standard average and the standard deviation of the sample data at each position of the target bill, as shown in Figs. 3(a) and 3(b), the target to be judged is the entire output request image (i.e., the bill 5).

Thus, Itako fails to remedy the deficiencies of Suzuki et al. noted above with respect to independent Claims 1, 11-13, 26 and 27. Accordingly, these claims are patentable over the citations of record.

Independent Claims 28, 45 and 46 each recite, inter alia, judging whether or not drawing data is image data and, when as a result of judgment the drawing data is the

image data, judging whether or not the image data includes information indicating a judgment object image.

With the above arrangements and method, in order to effectively and efficiently judge whether the image data includes information indicating the judgment object image, the judgment can be performed when the drawing data is the image data, but not when the drawing data is not the image data, such as characters, figures or the like.

Applicant respectfully submits that neither Suzuki et al. nor Itako, whether taken individually or in combination, discloses judging whether drawing data is image data and in the case the drawing data is image data, whether the image data includes the information indicating the judgment object image.

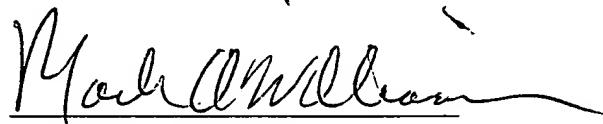
Thus, Suzuki et al. and Itako also fail to disclose or suggest important features of the present invention recited in independent Claims 28, 45 and 46 and these claims are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1, 11-13, 22, 23, 26-28, 45 and 46. Dependent Claims 2-10, 14-21, 24, 25 and 29-44 are also allowable, in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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